

**ROGERS WHITE PAPER**

# **HOSTED IP VOICE: LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELD FOR SMALL BUSINESS**

Rev. May 2011



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Introduction	3
Small Business Telephony Options	4
Basic Phone Service	4
Traditional PBX and Key Systems	4
Digital Services—Business Cable and VoIP	5
Hosted IP Voice	5
Benefits of Hosted IP Voice	6
Easy Set Up and Administration	6
Cost Effectiveness	6
Support for Multiple Locations and a Mobile Workforce	6
Scalability	7
Advanced Features for Business	7
Big Company Image	8
Reliability	8
Is Hosted IP Voice Right for Your Business?	9
Rogers Hosted IP Voice	10
Getting Started Is Easy	10
We're Here to Help Every Step of the Way	10
Want to Learn More?	10
About Rogers Communications	11

## INTRODUCTION:

---

As a small business, you need to stay connected with your customers, suppliers and other stakeholders, and your telephone system is a critical way of maintaining that connection. Not all business phone solutions are created equal, however, and they don't all deliver on the key needs of small businesses.

Here are some of the things that small businesses have told us they look for in a phone system:

- **Cost effectiveness.** Depending on your provider and solution, the costs associated with setting up and supporting a business grade phone system, on top of monthly and long distance charges, can be considerable. You need to manage costs and ensure that your systems are delivering value.
- **Seamless connectivity.** Whether you're in or out of the office, at your desk or on the road, your customers, suppliers and other stakeholders need to be able to reach you quickly and easily. Missed calls can mean missed opportunities. Ideally, your customers should only need one phone number to reach you anywhere, anytime.
- **Productivity-enabling features.** You may need to direct callers to different extensions or locations depending on the time of day. Or you may want to ensure that your customers always reach a live person. You may even want all calls directed to a professionally recorded auto attendant to achieve a more professional image. There are many features for many business needs, but not all phone systems offer them.
- **Easy set up and management.** You probably don't want to wait weeks to set up the services that you need today, and you don't want service calls to get in the way of your business. You probably just want to plug in your phone and know that it will work. You may also want to manage answering rules and calling features yourself without speaking with a customer services representative—as long as your level of effort is low.
- **Flexibility and scalability.** If your business is growing quickly, or your employee headcount fluctuates seasonally, you may want to add or remove phone lines without incurring a lot of cost and delay.

It's up to you to decide what is most important for your business. Once you've established your priorities, you can start to consider the options and decide which business phone system best delivers on those requirements.

## SMALL BUSINESS TELEPHONY OPTIONS

Traditional business phone services range from basic and inexpensive to fully loaded and costly. But new communications technologies are changing the game by providing fresh options for small businesses. Read on to learn about the differences.

### Basic Phone Service

Some businesses opt for a basic phone line with no business grade features. This is a low-cost solution, but it's also low value. It may work for some very small businesses or businesses that put little emphasis on customer service; however, if you're a growing business that cares about productivity or providing customers with convenient options to reach you, it probably won't meet your needs. If you wanted to add advanced features, you would have to look at add-ons or invest in a PBX or key system.

### Traditional PBX and Key Systems

Many businesses choose a phone company service for advanced business features, such as extension dialing, call routing and an auto attendant. PBX (private branch exchange) systems and key systems have been around for decades. They require the installation of on-premises switch equipment as well as a dedicated physical space for that equipment. They also require technician visits to activate the system, add and remove lines and otherwise support the system. These services are costly both in terms of the initial investment and the recurring costs, which puts them beyond the reach of many small businesses.

Phone companies also offer Centrex services, which provide some advanced calling features without the on-premises switching equipment. Housing the switch at the telecom's central office offloads some of the responsibilities of a PBX; however, this kind of service must still be administered by the provider, and it requires a scheduled technician visit every time a line is added. Like a traditional PBX, traditional Centrex won't let you integrate home or mobile numbers with the centralized system.

## Digital Services — Business Cable and VoIP

Beyond the traditional phone company offerings, there are a variety of digital services that leverage voice over IP (VoIP) technology to provide strong alternatives for small businesses. Business cable phone offers many advanced and online features for business, combined with reliable and high quality service. Of course the business must be located within range of the cable provider's network, and activating these services also requires a visit from a technician.

VoIP services that send voice calls over the Internet have been around for several years and are popular with consumers, especially for the long distance savings they offer. Businesses have also embraced business-grade VoIP services for a variety of other reasons, including rich feature functionality, operational cost savings—they don't need to support separate voice and data networks—and the ability to integrate other business systems such as email and video conferencing. Large enterprises typically deploy IP PBX solutions on their network with the help of a systems integrator, and the solution is managed internally by the company's IT department. Unfortunately, this option is frequently beyond the means of small businesses.

## Hosted IP Voice

Now there are VoIP services that meet the varying communications needs of small businesses at prices they can afford. The breakthrough is the cloud-based, or hosted, delivery model; essentially, the IP-based PBX software resides remotely on the service provider's server, and the customer securely accesses it over the Internet for a low monthly fee. Cloud-based business services are taking off as small businesses seek to control costs and outsource non-core capabilities. Hosted phone services deliver rich business phone functionality without the cost and administrative complexity of an on-premises system.

## **BENEFITS OF HOSTED IP VOICE**

As well as relieving small businesses of the need to own and manage their phone system, a hosted IP voice service provides excellent usability, performance and cost advantages.

### **Easy Set Up and Administration**

Unlike a conventional PBX, a hosted service doesn't involve installing a switchboard or other hardware on premises. All software and hardware are securely accessed in the cloud. In fact, once you've ordered the service, which you can do online, your phone numbers are activated and you can use them as soon as your IP handsets arrive. Your pre-configured IP handsets will be shipped to you and you simply have to plug them in. With no technician visit required and a Web-based portal that lets you easily configure calling features from anywhere, a hosted IP voice is truly easy to get up and running.

Your service provider performs software upgrades and other system maintenance in the background, so that you can concentrate on your core business.

### **Cost Effectiveness**

Because there is no hardware installation, no technician visits and low activation fees, there is also no heavy initial cost. Monthly rates are also 32 to 61 per cent lower than PBX and Centrex services offered by the phone companies.<sup>1</sup> Plus certain services offer unlimited North American long distance calling, just like a consumer VoIP service, and a large package of toll-free minutes.

### **Support for Multiple Locations and a Mobile Workforce**

You can select either a toll-free or a local number as your main business number, and an auto-attendant system can route calls to multiple extensions. These extensions can be used in a single office or at many geographically dispersed locations. Your extensions can be configured to ring on an office line, a home phone, a mobile handset or directly to voicemail, enabling flexibility and seamless connectivity with customers, suppliers and employees.

<sup>1</sup> Based on comparative pricing research conducted by Rogers of business phone services in Canada. Rogers estimates that hosted IP voice service provides 61% annual savings over a PBX, 56% over Centrex and 32% over other VoIP services. Cost calculations include the following: monthly costs, hardware costs, unlimited North American long distance, advanced features, MACD, annual service contract, premise equipment, setup costs, onboarding costs. For more information, please visit [www.rogers.com/hostedipvoice](http://www.rogers.com/hostedipvoice).

## Scalability

If your company is growing, or if your headcount fluctuates seasonally, a hosted IP service lets you easily add extensions, create departments and connect remote offices—all through an on-line management portal that requires minimal training to use. No technician visits required.

## Advanced Features for Business

A hosted IP voice service comes with a large list of business-class features—basically everything you would get with an enterprise PBX solution. And unlike other systems, all features are usually included for one flat rate. There are too many features to describe here, but here are a few key ones to consider:

- One phone number can be directed to any extension, any fixed or mobile number or voicemail depending on the date, time or caller ID.
- Calls can hunt through a sequence of lines that you configure until the call is answered.
- Screen calls before deciding whether to pick up or send them to voicemail.
- Easily record calls for quality assurance or to save note-taking. Download the audio files to your computer or forward them as email attachments.
- Send, receive and edit Internet faxes as PDF email attachments. You can throw out your old fax machine!
- Extensions and calling features can be easily set up and managed through an easy-to-use online portal.
- Integrate your Microsoft Outlook so that you can click to call from your email.

## **Big Company Image**

A hosted IP voice phone system can make your small business indistinguishable from a large enterprise. Toll-free numbers, auto attendant and dial-by-name directory, hold music, extension dialing, and calling queues help you better compete against your larger competitors.

## **Reliability**

As a lifeline to your business, your business phone always has to be on. A hosted IP voice solution should provide multiple layers of network and service redundancy, including more than one network location with primary and backup servers. A hosted solution should also provide real-time automatic monitoring of the network as well as robust security systems, processes and audits.



## IS HOSTED IP VOICE RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

There are clearly a lot of compelling benefits associated with a hosted IP voice service. It's not going to be the right solution for every organization, but it's worth considering if it makes sense for your business. To get started, ask yourself these questions:

- Are you a new business or are you opening new locations?
- Do you have a remote or a mobile workforce?
- Do you have a broadband Internet service at your workplace?
- Are your telephony needs changing and growing along with your business?
- Are you looking for cost certainty and cost savings?
- Are you comfortable with outsourcing a core business service if you know that service is secure and reliable?
- Are you open to trying new technology to control costs, make your business more productive or improve customer experience?
- Is time important to you when you're activating or implementing changes to a business service?
- Would you like to take control of your phone system and manage it through a simple Web interface?
- Would you like your customers to be able to reach you or your workforce anywhere, anytime using just one number?
- Do you have a dispersed team that you want to connect with one system that makes them feel like they're all working under one roof?

If you answered yes to more than one of these questions, we recommend that you speak with a reputable provider of hosted IP voice services.

## ROGERS HOSTED IP VOICE

---

Rogers Hosted IP Voice is a complete, out-of-the-box, cloud-based business phone system that eliminates expensive on-premises equipment, includes ready-to-use phones, and provides enterprise-class functionality at a cost that makes sense for small businesses.

Your phone system can be activated quickly when you order the service, and your setup costs will be far lower than those of a traditional phone system. Select Rogers Hosted IP Voice as your business phone and you can:

- Set up your phone system to work the way you do.
- Get the business phone system, voice and fax features you need.
- Integrate office, mobile, and distributed employees under one phone system.
- Manage calls, voicemail, and faxes from your mobile phone.
- Significantly reduce setup costs and ongoing operating costs.
- Add users and phones any time.

### Getting Started Is Easy

We make it easy for you to order and activate your Hosted IP Voice solution. You can either speak with a Rogers Business Specialist or go to a secure website to select your service and sign up.

### We're Here to Help Every Step of the Way

Rogers Hosted IP Voice is easy to use and manage. To make it even easier, we provide you with dedicated onboarding support while you set up your service. Plus you can always call a Rogers Live Agent with a question or issue and be quickly connected to a technical expert who can help you.

### Want to Learn More?

Contact your local authorized Rogers Dealer to book an in-store appointment with a Small Business Specialist or call 1-800-850-4217 to speak to a Small Business Specialist by phone.

You can also visit [www.rogers.com/hostedipvoice](http://www.rogers.com/hostedipvoice).

## ABOUT ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS

---

Rogers Communications connects 1.5 million subscribers in small, medium and large businesses and the public sector to their customers, suppliers, partners and employees with reliable wireless voice and data services. As well, approximately 115,000 subscribers rely on Rogers for affordable and reliable small business Internet, telephone, and TV services that help improve their customer service and bottom line.

Rogers wireless voice and data services are built on Rogers proven HSPA+ network, the first in Canada and the only one based on GSM, the global standard. Rogers phones and devices are world ready, allowing employees to stay connected wherever their business takes them. Rocket™ internet services enable businesses to get easy internet access where and when they need it and to remain productive and responsive. Rogers also provides custom wireless solutions for mobile workers, fleet and asset management, business continuity and machine-to-machine communication. All Rogers business services are backed by 24/7 technical support.

For more information, please visit [www.rogers.com/business](http://www.rogers.com/business).

---

™Rogers, Rocket & Mobius Design plus and related brands marks and logos are trade-marks of or used under license from Rogers Communications Inc. or an affiliate. All other brand names are trade-marks of their respective owners. ©2011 Rogers Communications

